



Inside Northside

BOARD Talk

BOARD Talk is published to help keep staff and citizens informed about actions of the Northside Independent School District Board of Trustees.

January 20, 2026

Superintendent's Report (Click [HERE](#) to view video of the Superintendent's full comments.)

Dr. John Craft reported to the Board:

- **Board Luncheon.** Former NISD Superintendents and Trustees joined current District leaders at an annual luncheon where past leaders were able to share conversation and learn about the state of Northside.
- **Raba Anniversary.** The Raba Elementary community, including Principal Cole Bader, staff, and students, gathered to celebrate the school's 25th anniversary alongside members of the Carl and Bunny Jean Raba family.
- **STEM Lab.** Principal Jennifer Bock and the Glass Elementary staff successfully hosted a mobile STEM bus, providing students with a variety of engaging, hands-on learning activities.
- **School Summit.** NISD is collaborating to host the second annual School Connect Summit at the NISD Sports Gym on Feb. 3.
- **Video Moment.** School bus drivers are the first and last faces that many NISD students see each school day. What does it take to be a school bus driver? [Watch this video to find out.](#)

Board Members' Report (Comments below are summarized. Click [HERE](#) to view video of the Trustees' full comments.)

- **Trustee David Salcido** expressed gratitude for the new traffic signals at **Jay High School**, commending City Council Members Ric Galvan and Edward Mungia for their prompt efforts in securing these essential safety improvements. Additionally, he expressed gratitude for the various tokens of appreciation received during Board Appreciation Month.
- **Trustee Sonia Jasso** extended her appreciation to Council Members Galvan and Mungia for their assistance in securing school zone flashers at **Jay High School**, a project stemming from an ongoing traffic study that continues to assess campus access points. She also thanked the parents of Jose Torres III for their active advocacy for these safety improvements. Furthermore, Jasso highlighted a new pilot program at **Ross Middle School** that provides in-person tutoring for AVID students through a partnership with the Alamo Colleges District (ACD), specifically recognizing ACD Trustee Gerald Lopez for his instrumental role in launching the initiative.
- **Trustee Karla Duran** expressed gratitude to district mental health workers and counselors for their dedicated service. She thanked Principal **Cynthia Barrera** for hosting the **Holmes High School** scholarship night featuring the McDonald's Hacer Scholarship. She also commended the fine arts programs at **Marshall High School** and **Evers Elementary** for their holiday performances, including those at the San Antonio International Airport. Furthermore, Duran thanked Council Member Ric Galvan for his pre-holiday donations to several campuses and recognized Mayor Gina Ortiz-Jones and city leaders for soliciting input on shifting the city election cycle. She welcomed new NISD Chief of Police **Richard Palomo**, attended the **Holmes** Husky Breakfast hosted by Coach **Pete Padilla**, and offered congratulations to **Raba Elementary** on its 25th anniversary. To conclude, she reminded the community of the upcoming **Marshall High School** 75th Anniversary on Jan. 22 and thanked all participants in the city's MLK Day march.
- **Trustee Bobby Blount** commended the productive dialogue between the Board and the NISD Council of PTAs and provided an update on the Greater San Antonio Reading Challenge, which concludes in April. He also highlighted the recent Juvenile Justice Jeopardy event at Second Chance Academy, thanking SASC Director **Kathy Lyssy** and teachers **Jackie Escamilla** and **William Helmick** for their leadership in this innovative program. Finally, Blount alerted Trustees to the upcoming National Science Bowl Competition and the Texas Education Policy Institute Conference.
- **Trustee Laura Zapata** attended the annual **Holmes HS** breakfast, thanking Athletic Director **Pete Padilla** and Principal **Cynthia Barrera** for their hospitality. She noted that this year's event marks the final breakfast held in the

school's current gymnasium before it is rebuilt during upcoming campus renovations. Additionally, she commended the talented student performers and directors from two exceptional fine arts events: the **Jefferson Middle School** Advanced Band concert and the **Stevenson Middle School** Choir concert.

- **Trustee Karen Freeman** highlighted the district's legacy by attending the former Superintendent and Trustee luncheon, noting that current success is built upon the foundation laid by past leaders. She also celebrated the 25th anniversary of **Raba Elementary**, honoring the contributions of namesakes Carl and Bunny Jean Raba. Although Mr. Raba could not attend, his family was present to commemorate the milestone. Additionally, Freeman attended the grand opening of the **ASTA** general store and new meat processing facility, concluding with a reminder for Trustees regarding the upcoming annual Gerlach Livestock Show and Sale.

Recognitions

- **Northside Citizenship Award Presentation.** The Board presented the prestigious Northside Citizenship Award to John Gomez, a parent volunteer at Ott Elementary School, who performed the life-saving Heimlich maneuver on a student who began choking.
- **Council of PTAs, Northside Education Foundation, and Northside Museum Association honor NISD Trustees.** The Northside Council of PTAs, represented by PTA Council President **Candy Bauman**; the Northside School Museum Association, led by President **Linda Lieck**; and the Northside Education Foundation, represented by Secretary **Jerry Lammers**, honored NISD's seven Board members. Every year, the Texas governor proclaims January as School Board Recognition Month. NISD is joining other districts across the state to gratefully acknowledge the invaluable contributions that members of the Boards of Trustees make to our various districts and communities. School trustees serve as key advocates for students and work together to provide a better future for every student.

Trustees heard a report about District Optimization

The Board heard a report about a process regarding District Optimization from Deputy Superintendent Dr. Jo Ann Fey. The purpose of District Optimization is to ensure effective use of resources to improve outcomes for students, teachers, families, and the community.

Trustees approve Health and Wellness Benefits Consultant

The Board heard a report from Leticia Ramirez, Director of Benefits, regarding the selection of a Health and Wellness Benefits Consultant. This group is instrumental in providing guidance to the District as we continue to work through our self-funded medical insurance and provide optimal, affordable options for employees.

Board approves audit of District's financial report

The Board approved the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) audit for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2025. The report consists of management's representations regarding the District's financial condition and operations, and the results of an audit performed by the certified public accounting firm of Whitley Penn. The audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The auditors have issued an unmodified opinion, the highest level of assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement, according to Tiffany Contreras, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance.

Board receives update on Northside ISD Virtual Academy

The Board heard a report on plans to establish a Virtual Academy to retain and recruit students and increase enrollment. The phased-in approach would begin with grades 9 through 11, starting in the 2026-27 school year.

Board hears mid-year progress update

Dr. Susan Cleveland, Executive Director of Continuous Improvement, presented a mid-year update on the progress on several Northside campuses.

NEF presents annual report to Board

Northside Education Foundation Secretary Jerry Lammers presented the annual State of the Foundation report to the Board.

Trustees approve administrative appointments:

- **LaDonna Tate**, formerly Assistant Principal at Fairfax County Public Schools, was appointed **Academic Dean** at **Ross Middle School**.
- **Jeannette Rainey**, formerly Assistant Principal at Stinson Middle School, was appointed **Director** at **Stinson Magnet School**.

Board approves facilities items:

- Contractor for boiler replacement at various elementary schools – Flo-Aire Services
- Contractor for mechanical upgrades at Taft High School – Jack Laurence Corporation
- Change Orders:
 - Jones MS and Raba ES mechanical upgrades (\$185,216.60 credit)
 - Leon Valley ES mechanical upgrades (\$248,301.26 credit)
 - Connally MS and Carson ES boiler replacement (\$99,667.40 credit)
 - Central Office mechanical and roofing upgrades, code-required electrical upgrade (\$93,487 add)

Trustees review and/or approve policies:

- First reading of BDB (LOCAL) Policy

Bids for goods approved

Trustees approved the following bids, awards, and recognition items: portable building relocations; software, licenses, subscriptions, related products and services districtwide; industry-based certifications and licenses for Career and Technical Education (CTE); firewall, VPN, and support licenses E-Rate; LAN equipment E-Rate; water-based fire protect system test inspection; medical equipment and supplies; and auto mechanic hand tools and equipment. Trustees also approved the following purchase orders: District Management (DM) Group for the purchase of teacher coaching and instructional support at Holmes and Jay high schools; and Bailey Education Group, LLC for the purchase of teacher coaching and instructional support at Neff MS. For more information, contact the Purchasing Department at 210-397-8700.

You may mail correspondence to:

Trustees
c/o NISD
5900 Evers Road
San Antonio, TX 78238

You may email them at info@nisd.net.

For additional information, call 210-397-8770.

Board of Trustees

David Salcido, Trustee, District 1
Sonia Jasso, Ph.D., Trustee, District 2
Karla Duran, Ph.D., Trustee, District 3
Bobby Blount, Trustee, District 4
Laura Zapata, Trustee, District 5
Carol Harle, Ph.D., Trustee, District 6
Karen Freeman, Trustee, District 7

Administration

Superintendent John Craft, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent for Administration Jo Ann Fey, Ph.D.
Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction Janis Jordan, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent for Business & Finance Megan Bradley
Assistant Superintendent of Communications Barry Perez

Board meeting information

NISD Trustees meet monthly in regular meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month. They may also meet in Called Meetings for workshops, retreats, or to handle routine business. Meetings are held at 6 p.m. in the Board Room, 5900 Evers Road, unless otherwise posted. Meetings are open to the public. Agendas are posted on the NISD website, www.nisd.net. Citizens who wish to address the Board must sign up to speak just before the start of the meeting.

Upcoming School Board Meeting(s): (See posted agendas on the website as dates, locations, and/or times may change.)

- Feb. 10, 2025, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Called Board Meeting)

- Feb. 24, 2025, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Regular Board Meeting)
- March 24, 2025, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Regular Board Meeting)
- April 14, 2025, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Called Board Meeting)
- April 28, 2025, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Regular Board Meeting)